



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 February 2020

by M Cryan BA(Hons) DipTP MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/J1860/D/19/3241059

Spring Cottage, Rectory Lane, Shrawley WR6 6TP

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr P Gorrod against the decision of Malvern Hills District Council.
 - The application Ref 19/01081/HP, dated 18 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 13 September 2019.
 - The development proposed is the extension of the existing single storey to the front of the dwelling to create a two-storey element, and a single storey extension to the rear.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural

2. The description of development in the banner heading above is based on that used in the decision notice and on the appeal form. For clarity I have used that in preference to the description on the original application form, which was longer and included wording related to the merits and purposes of the proposal rather than descriptive of the development.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the host property.

Reasons

4. Spring Cottage is a traditional brick-built, two-storey cottage which has been altered and extended in recent years, sitting in a rural area of Shrawley. It has a T-shaped footprint with its main elevation close to and facing Rectory Lane at the front of the building, and a relatively large garden to the rear. The appeal proposal is for additions to the northern side of the property, with a first-floor extension at the front of the dwelling, and a single-storey ground floor extension behind. These would allow the creation of a larger bedroom upstairs, and a store and sitting room downstairs.
5. Although the roof ridge of the first-floor extension would be set slightly below the existing main roof ridge, its front wall would be aligned with the main front elevation of the house, and consequently the extension would not truly read as being a subordinate addition to the existing building. The combination of the increased size of the front part of the house and the rear extension with its pitched roof, would lead to the north-facing elevation being considerably larger

than at present. It would therefore dominate and change the appearance of the house when seen from the north. The cumulative effect of this proposal and earlier extensions would be to subsume the original modest cottage into the various additions, and this would be particularly apparent when seen heading south towards the appeal property along Rectory Lane.

6. Although previous permissions to extend the cottage were granted, it does not follow that any number of further extensions could be built without there at some point being a cumulative adverse impact on the character and appearance of the original dwelling. The appellant disagrees that 'the property has now exhausted its capacity to be extended', in part on the basis that by granting permission relatively recently for an extension (which has not been, and might not be built) the Council has effectively acknowledged that there remains capacity to extend the property. However, the most recent permission referred to¹ relates to a single-storey extension at the rear of the cottage, which would have a different effect on the appearance of the building, particularly as it would barely be seen from the public road. It is not therefore directly comparable to the proposal before me in terms of impact on the scale, character and appearance of the house. In this case, the scale and bulk of the proposed extension, particularly when considered cumulatively with the earlier additions, would dominate the original modest cottage.
7. The extension would be of materials to match the existing building, and would take various design cues such as fenestration and roof pitch from the original cottage. In these regards it would therefore be a complementary addition to the existing dwelling. However, these positive factors would not outweigh the other harm which would result from the proposal.
8. I conclude that the proposed extension would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the host building. It would therefore be contrary to policy SWDP21 of the 2016 South Worcestershire Development Plan, as well as guidance in the 2018 South Worcestershire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document. Among other things, these require development to respond to, complement and integrate with its surroundings. For the same reasons, it would conflict with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework in respect of securing high quality design, in particular paragraph 127 which seeks to achieve well-designed places.

Other matters

9. The design and siting of the proposed extension would not be detrimental to the living conditions of any neighbours, but a lack of harm in this regard does not weigh in favour of the proposal.
10. The appellant has suggested that the use of permitted development rights could significantly alter the external appearance of the dwelling, without requiring planning permission. However, there is no information before me which indicates either the form such a development might take, or the likelihood of such a course of action being pursued. On this basis, it is a factor which can only carry limited weight in my decision, and which is not sufficient to outweigh the harm I have identified.

¹ Malvern Hills DC reference 17/00621/HP

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above the appeal is dismissed.

M Cryan

Inspector